

English Teaching Class

April 20, 2012

The History of English Education in Japan

- ◉ Four eras according to Adamson-Fujimoto
 - ◉ Meiji
 - ◉ Taisho
 - ◉ Showa
 - ◉ Heisei

The Early Meiji Era: The "Boom" Era

- ◉ Foundation of the Monbusho
- ◉ "The use of English as the official language in Japan" by Mori Arinori
- ◉ Sending students to the US
- ◉ Six foreign language lessons in junior high schools
- ◉ English the official language of the first Tokyo University



MORI ARINORI

The Later Meiji Era: The First Backlash

- Students returned from abroad
 - some did not feel the need for English
- Separation of English education into two distinct entities: classroom English and ju-ken English
- Swan from the UK arrived and spread the Gouin Method
- Return to teaching Japanese and Chinese
- "How to analyse English sentences" (1905)

The Taisho Era

- ◉ Solidification of ju-ken English
- ◉ Palmer arrived and spread the Oral Method
 - ◉ English Teaching Research Institute
- ◉ First radio broadcasts
- ◉ "Interpretation of English sentences: An analysis and how to translate into Japanese" (1921)

The Showa Era

- Three Stages:

- Pre-war

- Immediate Post-war to the Olympics

- Later Post-war/Showa

Pre-war & War-time Shows

- ◉ English seen as a negative influence
- ◉ Radio more and more popular
- ◉ "Urgent abolition of English education" (1927) & "Abolition of English lessons in junior high schools" (1938)
- ◉ Reduction of class lessons
- ◉ Return of Palmer (1936) and dismissal of foreign academics (1942)

Immediate Post-war to the Olympics

- Occupation played a major role in influencing people to learn English
- The radio program, "Come, Come English" on NHK
- Fries (Audio-Lingual) came to Japan
- Two different streams (classroom English and ju-ken English) reappeared
- Monbusho course of study started
- The STEP test started (1963) in response from business leaders

Later Post-war/ Late Showa

- English boom from the Olympics
- Debate between Hiraizumi, who wanted English to be taught to only those who needed it, and Watanabe, who wanted English education for all
- TOEIC Test introduced (1979)

Later Post-war/ Late Showa II

- ◉ English class numbers reduced to three in junior high schools ("yutori") in 1980
- ◉ Teachers campaigned against this
- ◉ Communicative methodologies gain more support
- ◉ JET program started

Heisei

- ◉ Oral Communication classes in high schools
 - ◉ To directly influence speaking ability
- ◉ Growing popularity of the JET program and the Internet
- ◉ Super English High Schools
 - ◉ Content courses taught in English

Heisei II

- English in primary schools
- Globalization, cultural differences, international understanding slogans
- "A new peak in English language education"

Conclusions by Fujimoto-Adamson

- Varying booms and backlashes over history
- Booms due to importation of foreign methodologies and teachers as well as entrance examinations
- Backlashes due to expanding nationalism and a reduced status of English
 - Returnees in late Meiji
 - Yutori needs more urgent

• English has been viewed as, at times, a necessary vehicle to catch up with the West—its technology and commercial expansion—and also, at times, as a representation of the West, and therefore to be rejected